

# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

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ACTION: Amembassy BONN

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Please deliver following letter from President to Chancellor Adenauer at earliest opportunity.

BEGIN TEXT

Dear Mr. Chancellor:

Thank you for your letter of October 4.

I was especially gratified by your reaction to my speech at the United Nations, as I was also by Foreign Minister von Brentano's public expressions of appreciation.

It is a source of satisfaction to me that you have frankly expressed your views concerning European security. It is only through such candid exchanges that we can preserve the unity and resolution of the West, which, we both agree, is absolutely essential.

Before turning to the main subject of your letter, I should like to take this occasion to put before you certain general considerations relating to the present stage of the Berlin crisis. With the conclusion of the round of talks which Secretary of State Rusk and I have had with Foreign Minister

Gromyko

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Telegraphic transmission and  
classification approved by:

EUR - Foy D. Kohler

Chancery

S/S - Mr. Brubeck - White House - Mr. Bundy  
Defense-ISA - Mr. Nitze Amb. Bohlen  
Amb. Thompson

B - Mr. Ball (in draft)  
Amb. Dowling

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Gromyko, the time has come to take counsel with one another. In cooperation with our British and French Allies, we need to assess the significance of certain statements made by Mr. Gromyko, to determine the best course of action for us to pursue, and then to move ahead decisively along lines calculated to achieve our common objectives with respect to Germany and Berlin.

You have been kept fully informed of our discussions with Gromyko through your Ambassador in Washington. As you know, these talks were purely exploratory on both sides. In a real sense they did not move beyond the stage of verbal sparring. As Secretary Rusk indicated to the Ambassadors, the following generalizations seem justified in the light of the Gromyko talks.

1. The Soviets have been warned and they appear to have taken cognizance of the warning that our present course is dangerous to them.
2. They are clear on the point that negotiations on Germany and Berlin must be between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers, not between the GDR and the Western Powers.
3. The time element has acquired a certain fluidity in terms of when the Soviets will proceed with unilateral action, but the West does not have unlimited time. The Soviets could, of course, proceed on a basis not disclosed by Mr. Gromyko.
4. Further contact of an exploratory nature with the Soviet Union is desirable not only to probe but to prevent unilateral acts by the Soviets which would change the facts of the situation.

I think it fair to say that, if the substance of a possible modus vivendi on Berlin has not emerged, at least the possible outlines of a procedural formula,

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of a framework, were suggested within which the West could reasonably explore further the possibilities of such a modus vivendi. I am referring here to the idea that a separate agreement between the United Kingdom, France, the United States and the Soviet Union might be achieved <sup>which</sup> the Soviets would undertake to superimpose upon their separate peace treaty in such form as to assure our vital interests, which include the freedom and viability of West Berlin.

[REDACTED]

We have made it quite clear to the

Soviets that we will not be parties to such a treaty, but this act has acquired such symbolic importance for them that at some point they will proceed to consummate it. The question for us is whether we should passively and fatalistically accept this inevitability or whether we should make a final effort to achieve by negotiation a better result than the de facto situation which we will in any event face after the conclusion of the separate QUOTE peace treaty UNQUOTE. It must be made clear that we have no intention of withdrawing from Berlin nor do we intend to give our rights away in any negotiations. On the other hand, the logic of history and the needs of the Alliance demand that every effort, consistent with our vital interest, be made to solve this problem by peaceful and diplomatic methods before the ultimate confrontation.

I should not want to give you the impression that I am optimistic about the possible outcome of negotiations with the Soviets. Mr. Khrushchev is not interested in strengthening our position in Berlin, and he obviously has in mind using the leverage

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leverage which the apparent advantages of geography give him to extract maximum concessions from the West. We cannot permit him to deprive us of any of our vital interests in Berlin, and it may well be that our application of this criterion will make any agreement impossible to attain. But we shall not find out beyond doubt until we have come to grips with the Soviets in a more substantively significant way than up to the present.

In the meantime, we must continue our military build-up and perfect our contingency planning in all its ramifications. This is a matter on which we expect to be in further communication with you.

My own view is that for the immediate future, through the period of the Soviet Congress, bilateral discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union should continue, conducted by the United States Ambassador in Moscow with Mr. Gromyko, or if necessary, Mr. Khrushchev. If these bilateral talks go sufficiently well, a Foreign Ministers' conference might be held at a later time, perhaps in mid-November. We would, of course, keep you fully informed on these discussions.

At some point we will have to decide whether to propose negotiations with the Soviets of a formal character. If we cannot make progress through the normal processes of diplomacy, then we shall be faced with even graver military decisions than those we have taken so far. Should the confrontation over Berlin move to the stage of great and dramatic crisis, we shall require not only all the resolution and clarity of purpose which we can muster but also assurances that the Alliance as a whole, and its principal members, are fully aware of and prepared for all

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the consequences in a military sense.

Coming now to the subject of European security, I agree with you that there is a great lack of clarity surrounding this concept as well as much public confusion.

Perhaps some of this will be eliminated by my stating unequivocally to you that in we are/agreement on your main point that the imposition of a special military status for any country of Western Europe especially the Federal Republic, would be an invitation for further Soviet incursions in Europe. This would, as you say, include great dangers for the United States, particularly for its security.

I should also clarify that so-called QUOTE disengagement UNQUOTE is not something we contemplate at all. This would create a vacuum of responsibility, and I do not believe we can escape our responsibilities.

As indicated in the disarmament proposals ~~W-N~~ presented to the United Nations, the United States Government takes the problem of disarmament very seriously and is prepared to exhaust every effort to see what progress can be made in this field. We think it would be worthwhile to see how the confrontation in Central Europe might be reduced. It would certainly be to the great advantage of the West if the concentration of Soviet forces in the satellites could be lowered. Steps should/also be studied that would assure both sides that no surprise attack is being prepared, or is about to be launched. All of this proceeds from our deep convictions that it is in the common interest of both sides that the peace be kept.

However, all these matters will require the most careful study and much time for their development. The United States regards this process as a search for areas of agreement.

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of agreement. It is by no means something that could be agreed very quickly.

As far as the nuclear weapons component of European security is concerned, I need not remind you that it has been the long-established policy of the US Government not to relinquish control of nuclear warheads to any nation not owning them and not to transmit to any such nation information or material necessary for their manufacture. This policy is reaffirmed in the US Program for General and Complete Disarmament submitted recently in the United Nations. It is my understanding that this concept is in fact entirely acceptable to you, and indeed in conformity with your own announced policies.

Let me assure you that none of this is considered under any illusion as to and purposes the nature of the Soviet regime, with your assessment of which I can wholly agree.

Let me also assure you that I have the security of the United States and the Federal Republic very much in mind and would do nothing that might endanger either, or that might lead to/undermining of NATO, on which the security of both our nations depends.

I trust, dear Mr. Chancellor, that we are in agreement on these matters, and I would appreciate your sending me your thoughts to which we both attribute such great importance.

Sincerely,

(signed) John F. Kennedy

END TEXT

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